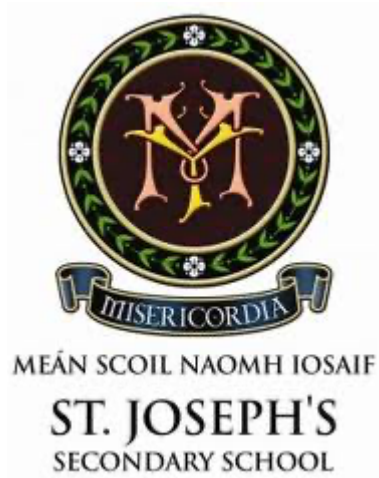


St. Joseph's Secondary Ballybunion



SCHOOL POLICY on INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Signed _____ Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Introduction

This document has been developed to assist the members of our school community in the process of administering successful international student enrolment and engagement in St. Joseph's Secondary School, Ballybunion. St. Joseph's is dedicated to promoting quality international youth education that enriches our local school community also.

Current events clearly show how much more interconnected all of us are to the whole world. This gives schools ever more impressive reasons for accepting international students enthusiastically and having them as a resource to broaden student and community perspectives on the world.

Our programme in St. Joseph's Ballybunion provides foreign exchange students with an Irish experience, giving them a more balanced understanding of our country. The programme encourages new perspectives for the school's own students and opens their minds to the world. More importantly, these 'connections' help teenagers on both sides of the learning experience to grow and gain maturity. These cross-cultural experiences offer unique opportunities for our European schools to help their students and communities:

- Learn first-hand about other cultures and customs
- Create life-long friendships across cultures
- Gain new perspectives on our country and the world
- Begin to understand how tightly connected the peoples and countries of the world are to each other, something our world seriously needs
- Open young minds to the importance of understanding other languages and other cultures, particularly with respect to career and personal opportunities

At the same time, our school has a right to expect that international students and student exchange programs adhere to guidelines that will minimize problems and make success more likely. In all international programming, the human dynamic may sometimes complicate matters for administrators. However, the critical element is the ongoing relationship between the exchange program administrators and the school. Once this relationship is formed and articulated, problems can usually be managed effectively and ultimately resolved.

International students offer an exciting resource. Our school has created special events and programs to encourage all students to get to know these guests from other cultures and expand their own horizons and interests. Such efforts also help international students feel comfortable in an all-new life by taking full advantage of their opportunities.

SCHOOL POLICY ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PARTICIPATION

NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENTS

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's Secondary School Ballybunion accepts international students each year. The number of international exchange students that our school will accept and the timing/deadlines for the process vary. These guidelines suggest a middle ground that recognizes the needs of schools and international student programmes, taking into account the increasing difficulty of securing early student applications and host family commitments. Ideally, schools work toward a goal of 5 - 10% of the total student population being comprised of international students.

ENROLMENT OF INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Organizations must contact the Board of Management each year to indicate formally in writing an interest in placing international students. Applications for enrolment of international students will be made directly to the Principal. The Board will decide on the number of international students to be placed in any particular year. This number will be subject to the places available in the class and this may vary from year to year subject to school resources. A co-ordinator of international students is appointed by the Board. All documentation regarding enrolment in the school will be processed by the co-ordinator in consultation with the Principal.

TIMING OF PLACEMENT PROCESS

- Exchange organizations should provide schools with advance notice of their intent to place students.
- The school is to be notified as soon as Student and Host Family match-ups are confirmed.
- Recognizing the timing of school staffing and resourcing, exchange organizations should submit Student and Host Family applications as early as possible or by April of the academic year prior to enrolment. However, acknowledging the difficulty of securing Host Family commitments, the school will try to accept applications until school starts.
- Late/mid-year arrivals will be avoided.

SELECTING STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

- The school reserves the right to work with exchange organizations that have proved their commitment and responsiveness.
- The school will also be open to new organizations that demonstrate a serious commitment to the school and community.

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Our school reserves right of final approval on all student placements. Additionally, our school requires that each individual student exchange program must:

- Maintain a network of qualified and trained local representatives living in or near the community, with responsibility for each student - and provide orientation and ongoing support for both the host family and student.
- Provide continuing hands-on monitoring and responsiveness - from local representative to national headquarters - including student selection and preparation, selection and screening of host families, ongoing contact with host family and student, and communication with the school and responsiveness to school needs.
- Receive school enrolment authorization from the Board of Management for placements each year prior to contacting potential host families - and follow school policy on timing and requirements.
- Screen and prepare exchange students while monitoring their progress during the school year, responding to issues or problems as they develop.
- Arrange host family placements before exchange students leave their home country. Exchange students are expected to be in their host family and school placements by the first day of classes.
- Personally interview and screen all potential host families, matching student and family interests and personalities.
- In the event that tutoring/ESL help is needed, the organization will make arrangements and ensure that the student accepts financial responsibility for it.
- Provide the school with a complete student application which includes the following:
 - personal letter from the student
 - detailed information on student and natural family
 - proof that the student has sufficient language ability
 - original transcript of student's school grades, with translation
 - necessary medical history

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Each international student must be qualified to participate in regular classes and maintain a typical schedule - this means an acceptable level of proficiency in the English language, a commitment to treat coursework as important, and the social skills to enjoy participation in social and extra-curricular activities.
- International students must be aware that participating in interscholastic athletic teams means they must comply with eligibility regulations, and that many teams require try-outs.
- The school appreciates the difficulty of a student's plunge into a different language/culture/institution, but exchange students are expected to attain passing grades during their time in our school.
- International students and host families are expected to know and must follow all school policies and rules. International students are expected to speak English at all times during the school day or when engaged in school activities. There will be disciplinary measures in place if students persist in speaking in their mother tongue.

- Allocation of classes, teaching and learning and tuition for international students in the course of the school day is under the direction of school management and the teaching staff.

The school will make every effort to integrate international students into the school's social fabric. In turn, schools shall encourage international students to participate enthusiastically in school activities, to make friends, to make a personal contribution to the school - and to help spread the word about their country and themselves, informally and by making presentations in classes and to community groups and talking to media when asked.